

Hamgram

Newsletter of the Winona Amateur Radio Club, Inc. – May 2003
http://www.jarviscomputer.com/warc/hamgram/active_issues.php3

Meeting Notice

The May Meeting of the Winona Amateur Radio Club, Inc. will be held at the Winona County Courthouse Annex on Thursday, May 15, 2003. Our meeting this month will open at 7:00 pm with a program by Lance and Clare on how to use HF amateur radio equipment properly (Part III).

2003 ARRL June VHF QSO Party

By Matt, KFØQ

Over the years I have mentioned the ARRL VHF QSO parties hoping that it may stimulate some increase in activity on the 50 MHz and higher bands. Well this year is no exception. The League still sponsors two VHF QSO parties (June, September) and VHF Sweepstakes (January). The biggest operating event of the year for the VHF and higher enthusiast will take place next month. The ARRL June VHF QSO Party will take place on June 14, 15, and 16(UTC time) this year. The following information is re-printed from the August 2001 *Hamgram*:

For those of you not familiar with the QSO party format all that is required to participate is to make a contact with another station on vhf or higher simplex frequency, and exchange callsign and grid square. All you need to participate is an FM HT. Any station for 2M or 70cm base mobile - whatever will work fine. The grid square is actually quite easy as most of the area surrounding Winona is either EN44 or EN43. If you are closer to St Charles the border between EN34 and EN33 is just north of HWY 14 between Utica and St Charles. The VHF QSO Party is viewed to many as a time to find other stations out there on the vhf and higher bands. Many of the participants are casual operators not really interested in making big scores, but perhaps using the QSO Party to “shake down” a new rig, antenna or location. If you have a fixed station with a beam antenna you could be surprised how well you can get out with the number of stations out there listening for signals. Good places to look for activity on FM are 146.55, 146.58, 446.00, 223.500, and 52.525. For SSB on the vhf bands: 144.150 to 144.275 (144.200 the best), 432.100 and up, 222.100 and up, 50.125 and up. Use of the national calling freq on 2M of 146.52 is discouraged as well as local use of 146.46 FM.

Why am I telling you this? Several reasons:

1. First of all the QSO Party can be fun. It can be a challenge to try to work distant stations and really be a thrill to hookup during a possible band opening.
2. The QSO Party is a great way to shake down equipment, possible paths of propagation and operating techniques.
3. Our area in SE MN and Western Wisconsin is usually poorly represented with participants. Many times there are very few folks in EN33, 43 and 44 on the vhf bands. The Twin city metro area includes EN34, which is the exception where participation is much higher.
4. You might enjoy learning more about grid squares, equipment capability and be better prepared for a difficult situation down the road in the future. Keeping track of or “logging” contacts can be a useful drill as well.
5. Activity on the band is actually a good way to keep those commercial interests away from taking some of our precious available spectrum. If we don't use it - someone else will sure want to. We have already lost a portion of the seldom-used 220MHz band, and there have been threats to the 70cm band as well from commercial interests.”

(NEW 2003)

6. The League has been really taking a hard look a continuation of sponsoring all of these VHF events. The more folks participate the better it looks for the future.

7. Meet a new (or old) friend! During the June 2002 event I actually worked a fellow ham in northern Wisconsin on 146 FM that I haven't spoke to since 1977 when I was a high school freshman! Had I not been out there calling on 146.55 that Sunday morning I would have missed the opportunity. Not only was it great to hear from my friend Mike, N9LIG, he happened to be in EN55....Somewhat of a rare grid!

Updated other Info:

The QSO Party starts at 1:00PM Saturday June 14th, and runs until 10:00PM Sunday the 15th (18:00Z 6/14 - 03:00Z 6/16). That leaves plenty of time for folks to give it a try. Stations may be worked once per band and grid. If a station changes grids (such as a mobile station or "Rover") they can be worked again from the new grid. A few of us in the Winona area have participated in the ARRL QSO Parties before, and have actually done quite well in the past taking home 1st place in the Rover, Multiop, Single Operator Portable, and Single Op High Power titles for both the Minnesota, and the Dakota Division, as well as 3rd place in North America (twice) for Single Operator Portable!

For more info on the web: <http://www.remote.arrl.org/contests/rules/2003/june-vhf.html>

Also see the May 2003 QST on page 101 for the event announcement. For information on grid squares check: <http://www.arrl.org/locate/gridinfo.html>

A final Plea to put our area on the map! If you have a few free moments listen on the bands the weekend of the QSO Party. A great way to find activity is to program 146.55 and 446.00 into your scan frequencies (using a repeater is not allowed for valid contacts!). If you are mobile during the QSO party feel free to log up on these simplex frequencies with your call sign and grid.

If you own an all-mode rig that seldom gets used or hasn't really seen some vhf style DX, the June event is a great place to give it a test. You may be quite surprised who may be out there! The event this year is almost a full week later too, so propagation could be up if we get some hot summer WX. I plan to be active during the June event portable running in the Single Operator Portable category (10W max) again. This year I will be attempting to operate 9 bands from 50 through 5760MHz. FM contacts can really be fun hooking up with passing by mobiles or distant folks for some extra points. During the event weekend I will be checking out 146.55 at the top of each hour 7, 8, and 9:00 both AM/PM starting Saturday evening. I would be happy to answer any questions about the QSO Party, grid squares, whatever. I can be reached at 507-452-8931 or kf0q@arrl.net. If you do participate and would like some help with a log submission to the league - I would be happy to assist with that too. You do not need to be an ARRL member to participate in the QSO Party.

Hope to see you on the Bands!

Treats

By Ken, NØJP

A volunteer is needed to handle the treats for the June meeting. Due to unavoidable circumstances, the volunteer for that meeting is unable to do so.

Here is a reminder of the procedure: The person responsible for treats in June takes home supplies and equipment from the May meeting, checks them out, and returns them in June and so on. Members are not expected to expend their own funds. Expenses are extracted from the "kitty" or if short, requested from the treasurer.

The schedule for the rest of the year follows:

July	picnic		October	Steve Prussing	N9MFH
August	Joe Gorak	KCØMBL	November	Tom Wilmot	WØMK
September	Dick Angst	KCØMBT	December	Russ Marsolek	NØQK

FOR SALE

**Diamond K55KMM Mobile Mount for mini-van roof carrier plus Diamond NR-770HA dual band mobile whip. \$95.00 for both (New cost = \$127.00)
Jerry, WAØX, @ 454-8395.**

FOR SALE:

- **Tentec** 1208 Transverter 6 meter factory built unit uses 14MHz IF easily connects to HF rig (RF sensed keying) 10W max input on 14MHz 8-10W output 50MHz all modes. Has antenna bypass switch for connection to HF antenna and 50Mhz antenna. **Great shape - \$85.00**
- **Cushcraft** 11 element 430-450MHz yagi has holes for horizontal or vertical polarization wide BW weak signal 432 or FM work. Excellent condition never outside! **\$35.00**
- **Mosely** JR tribander all parts available traps repaired - small footprint (shorter boom)

Free to a good home.

Call Matt KFØQ at 452-8931, or 450-8623 , or kf0q@arrl.net

FCC ACCEPTING COMMENTS IN "BROADBAND OVER POWER LINE" INQUIRY

From the ARRL Letter Volume 22 Number 18

The FCC released its Notice of Inquiry (NOI) on the deployment of "Broadband over Power Line" (BPL) technology April 28 and now is accepting electronically filed comments in the proceeding, ET Docket 03-104. The technology has raised concerns of substantial interference to the Amateur Radio HF bands. BPL would couple high-frequency RF to parts of the power grid and use existing power lines as the transmission medium to deliver broadband and Internet services.

The FCC has expressed unabashed enthusiasm for BPL. ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, says Commission members have been acting more like cheerleaders than regulators. "We were disappointed in the tenor of some commissioners' statements, but we were encouraged by the fact that in the NOI itself the FCC did point out that licensed services--including Amateur Radio--'must be protected from harmful interference' from BPL," he said.

In the NOI, the FCC acknowledges the interference risk from BPL. "The multiple-carrier transmission nature of the new high-speed BPL technology could pose increased risk of harmful interference, and thus new BPL devices may need a higher degree of oversight to ensure that authorized users are not subject to interference," the FCC said.

The major interference threat to amateurs comes from so-called "access BPL," because its signals can radiate from outside power lines—possibly for great distances. The FCC also concedes that close proximity of access BPL equipment on utility poles might affect--and be affected by--cable TV and DSL service.

Current FCC Part 15 rules limit the amount of RF energy that can be injected into the power lines, but, as the FCC concedes, "the new generation of high-speed BPL devices that use wide spectrum was not contemplated" when those rules were formulated. The FCC has invited comments on possible changes to those rules.

The FCC also seeks information on a possible access BPL standards, spectrum and bandwidth, modulation techniques and data transmission speeds. Additionally, the Commission seeks the status of BPL development and anticipated deployment in the marketplace.

ARRL Laboratory Manager and RFI guru Ed Hare, W1RFI, has cautioned that BPL deployment could mean "a significant increase in noise levels" on HF. "Right now with BPL/PLC, there are more questions than answers, and until those questions are answered, these systems should not be widely deployed," Hare said.

"The time to raise and answer these questions is now. I truly hope that the NOI will provide a means for the FCC to do just that."

The ARRL Lab has prepared a comprehensive information page, "Power Line Communications (PLC) and Amateur Radio," on the ARRL Web site <<http://www.arrl.org/tis/info/HTML/plc/>>. ARRL Lab staff members also plan to visit sites where BPL is undergoing field testing.

The complete NOI is available on the FCC Web site

<http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-03-100A1.doc>. The FCC now is accepting electronically filed comments via its Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS) <<http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/ecfs/>>. Under ECFS Main Links, click on "Submit a Filing." In the "Proceeding" field, enter "03-104" and complete the required fields. Comments may be typed into a form, you may attach a file containing your comments or submit them via e-mail, per instructions on the ECFS page. The comment deadline will be 45 days after publication of the NOI in the Federal Register.

ARES Coordinator

By Les, KØBAD

Randy Wendel, KMØD, ARRL Section Manager for Minnesota, reports that Winona County's Emergency Coordinator (EC) position is vacant. The EC is the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) representative in Winona County and is an important link to the Minnesota and National ARES organization. ARES is the organization that officially "sponsors" and coordinates SKYWARN activities in Winona County. It is important that Winona County have an Emergency Coordinator assigned who is able to link our county ARES activities with the outside world.

If you are interested in finding out more about this position and the opportunity to serve the Amateur Radio Service and the greater Winona community, please write or call contact Randy at:

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